

USDA TO COLLECT FINAL 2010 CROP PRODUCTION NUMBERS

[Phoenix, Arizona] – It's that time of year again, as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) prepares to contact producers nationwide to gather final year-end production numbers. Through this end-of-year survey, Arizona farmers will help produce final tallies for the 2010 cotton and alfalfa crops. With U.S. soybean and corn production forecasted at record and near-record level highs, respectively, it's also vital for farmers to respond to the December Agricultural Survey to determine if these expectations were realized.

"The December Agricultural Survey, also known as the Crops/Stocks Survey, is the largest and most critical year-end survey conducted by NASS," explained Steven Manheimer, director of the NASS Arizona Field Office. "This survey is the basis for the official USDA estimates of production and harvested acres of all major agricultural commodities in the United States.

"With all the unusual weather early in the production season, data from the December Agricultural Survey will benefit farmers by providing timely and accurate information to help them make critical year-end business decisions and begin planning for the next growing season," added Manheimer.

During the first two weeks of December, NASS will contact selected Arizona producers by mail or telephone and ask them to provide information on their 2010 production and on-farm stocks of cotton and alfalfa. The information will be compiled and analyzed and then published in a series of USDA reports, including the annual *Crop Production* summary and quarterly *Grain Stocks* report, both to be released on January 12, 2011.

As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. "NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified," stated Manheimer.

All reports are available on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Arizona Field Office at (800) 645-7286.

###